LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **December 13, 2005, Work Session**AGENDA ITEM NO.: 6

CONSENT: REGULAR: X CLOSED SESSION:

(Confidential)

ACTION: X INFORMATION:

ITEM TITLE: Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP).

<u>SUMMARY:</u> Please find enclosed the final draft of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan. This plan came before Council in Work Session on September 13, 2005 and has also been discussed with the Physical Development Committee in August, September and November. The latest revision includes all of the edits made by the Physical Development Committee and also comes with its endorsement.

The NTMP has been under development for almost a year and has had a significant amount of input from City staff, Council (PDC members) and even citizens of Lynchburg. Staff is looking for Council's approval of the document. It should be noted that the staff position that will primarily implement this plan is currently vacant. Considerable effort is being made to fill this position as soon as possible.

PRIOR ACTION(S): Physical Development Committee August, September and November 2005 meetings; City Council September 13, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

CONTACT(S): Gerry Harter, 455-3935

<u>ATTACHMENT(S):</u> Final NTMP document.

REVIEWED BY: Ikp

Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP)



December, 2005
FINAL DRAFT DOCUMENT

City of Lynchburg Virginia

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City of Lynchburg Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

1. Introduction

Speeding has become an increasing concern to neighborhood residents and to governing agencies charged with ensuring traffic safety. Excessive speed jeopardizes both the safety and "livability" of our neighborhoods. As a consequence, the City of Lynchburg has implemented this Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) to address this important neighborhood concern. The NTMP enlists input from residents to help solve speeding problems and improve the residential environment. The program includes the components of public education, enforcement of laws and ordinances, and street and roadway engineering.

The program is adapted from the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT), "Residential Traffic Calming Guide," with input from other programs throughout the Commonwealth and the nation.

Traffic calming is defined by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) as "the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users." With the NTMP as a framework, City staff will work with neighborhoods to develop a plan to better manage speeding traffic. Although traffic calming is a major component in traffic management, this program was not called a "traffic calming" program as the term was considered to be too narrow. The term traffic management includes traffic calming as well as other strategies to slow speeds and make neighborhoods more livable.

Livability in neighborhoods is addressed in the City's Comprehensive Plan, specifically relating to traffic conditions within neighborhoods. The City of Lynchburg's *Comprehensive Plan*, *Transportation Element*, states:

Objective 1.D. Neighborhood Traffic. Ensure that traffic conditions do not degrade neighborhood quality.

1) Consider neighborhood-level impacts of transportation projects during preparation of Neighborhood Conservation Plans (see Chapter 4, Plan Framework) and employ traffic calming techniques to control...speeding traffic.

The NTMP is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that this program applies mainly to existing neighborhoods. New residential neighborhoods under review should be designed and constructed to include traffic management techniques. Guidelines for designing livable streets can be found in the documents Residential Streets, 3rd Edition (ISBN 0-874208-79-3), and Context Sensitive Street Design, APA. These documents are available from the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the American Planning Association, respectively.

2. Neighborhood Traffic Management Principles

The NTMP will be implemented and evaluated by Public Works Traffic Section staff with assistance from the Lynchburg Police Department. The intent of this program is to resolve traffic problems starting with the least restrictive measures, and proceeding through a step by step program. The program stresses a philosophy that incorporates the 3 E's in the following order of implementation:

- Education and Community Awareness
- Enforcement
- Engineering Signage and other Physical Devices

These are explained in more detail below.

<u>Education and community awareness</u> – This is a critical first step. Residents should be made aware of speeding concerns and should be reminded of the importance of driving safely in their neighborhood. City staff is available to speak to homeowner associations and others about neighborhood traffic management techniques and to help raise community awareness about advantages, disadvantages, costs, and funding options of traffic management options.

Also, speeding is often due to increased traffic demands on crowded primary streets. In most cases, improvements to the primary arterial streets and the addition of new primary streets will be the only solution to traffic congestion and speeding in neighborhoods. The community must be aware of the plans, (e.g., major street plan for primary street improvements) and recognize the impact on their neighborhood. Also, implementation and expansion of bicycle and pedestrian plans, and the use of public transit will reduce congestion on neighborhood streets.

Enforcement – Speeding problems are traditionally addressed through police enforcement. Police officers monitor and enforce the posted speed limit. Enforcement efforts should be undertaken as much as possible prior to considering implementation of physical traffic management measures. Increased penalties for excessive speed is a low-cost measure that does not physically restrict driver maneuvers. An ordinance for increased penalties will increase the awareness that speeding within a specific neighborhood is a serious concern and that there is community support for increased speeding fines. City Council would have to adopt a procedure to accept and implement increased speeding penalties for selected streets within the City limits. A *Speed Watch* program conducted by trained citizens can be an effective tool for educating the motorist. Each of these items (education and enforcement) is discussed in greater detail in Appendix A and should be read by residents interested in the NTMP.

Engineering - Signage suggested by engineering studies may also help reduce speeds and will support law enforcement. It should be noted that unwarranted signs could be more of a problem than a solution. Please refer to Appendix C for some common questions regarding traffic control in neighborhoods. Physical Devices are designed to reduce speed by creating a vertical or horizontal shift in the roadway or travel lanes (See Appendix B for details of physical measures used to slow traffic in neighborhoods). Because they are indiscriminate and affect all motorists,

they should be used only as a last resort and with a majority of residents agreeing to this action. Since Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are affected by physical measures, they too must have an active role in the management plan. It should be noted that this policy does not prohibit the City to do what is necessary and in the timeframe necessary to correct a documented safety concern.

3. Neighborhood Traffic Management Process

The following explains how the NTMP works and how and when in the process the residents will need to participate. The flow chart figure on the following page graphically summarizes the NTMP process.

3.1. Step 1 – Initiate Petition (Residents Responsibility)

Any resident can initiate the NTMP. If a resident feels that the traffic moving through the area is creating an unsafe situation or adversely affecting their quality of life, that resident should contact the City's Public Works Traffic Engineering Section (455-3950) and request a copy of this document.

To ensure that there is at least basic support for traffic management in the area in question, the resident initiating the process will be asked to obtain the signatures of at least three (3) other area residents living at three (3) different mailing addresses who support the request using the petition form presented on Page 6. This petition form must be used and returned to Traffic Engineering.

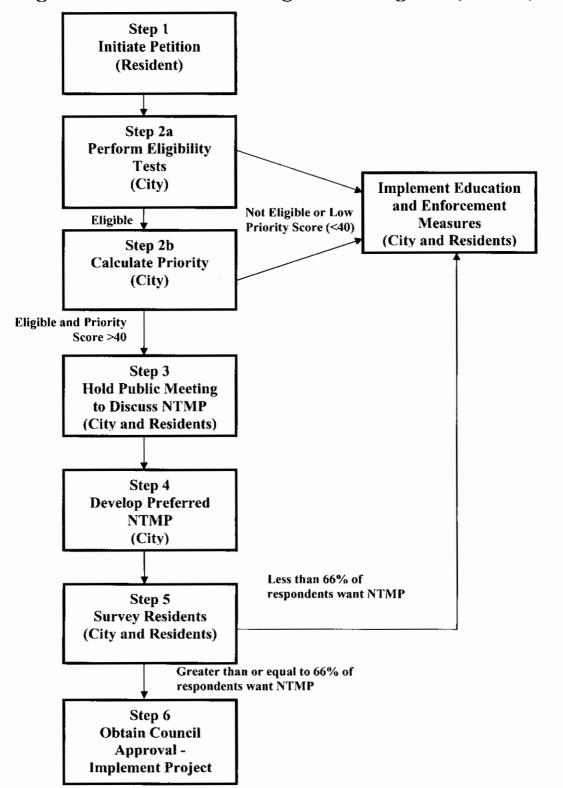
This request should also include the opinion of any existing neighborhood homeowner's association. Only one signature per property is allowed.

The petition should include all relevant data such as a description of the unsafe conditions, streets affected, time of day the safety concern is at its worst (if applicable), the speed limit of the roadway, possible causes of the problem, and other pertinent data to help Traffic Engineering staff identify and understand the problem.

When Traffic Calming could help:

- Speeding
- High Traffic Volumes
- Vehicular Safety Concerns
- Pedestrian Safety Concerns
- Noise Pollution
- Vibration

City of Lynchburg Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) Process



CITY OF LYNCHBURG NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PETITION

We, the residents of			, are in favor of pursuing
Traffic Management in our neighborhood, in accordance with the City of Lynchburg's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP), because of the following concern(s). (Please be specific and attach a separate sheet of paper if necessary.)			
Concern(s). (Flease de spe	ciric and attaci	a separate sheet of pa	per if necessary.)
Note: Please state names of r Also state whether the proble			
Signature Print	Name	Address	Date
Three (3) individual resident addition to the petitioner. On	_	. ,	ldresses are required in
Name of Concerned Citizen ((Petitioner)	Address	
Day Time Phone Number		Home Phone Number	
If a Homeowners Association	ı exists, please s	tate its collective opinio	n:
Homeowners Association Of	ficer/Date	Day Time Phone Numb	er er
Title		Home Phone Number	
Please send Petition to: City Traffic Engineer			
Public Works - Engineering, 900 Church Street	City Hall		
Lynchburg, VA 24504			

3.2. Step 2a – Perform Eligibility Tests (City Responsibility)

After a traffic management petition has been received by Traffic Engineering, City staff will determine whether the street(s) is (are) eligible for traffic management techniques. This will most likely require data collection efforts and could take up to 90 days to complete. City staff will also determine the study area as more than one road may be affected if traffic management techniques are applied to one street.

The following criteria must be used to determine if a street is eligible for traffic management techniques. If a street does not meet the criteria listed below, enforcement and education remain viable options to address neighborhood speeding.

- A. Local residential streets (two-lane) are eligible for traffic management techniques provided the posted speed limit does not exceed 25 mph. A local residential street provides direct access to abutting residences and serves to provide mobility within the neighborhood. Motorists on these streets should be entering and exiting the residences. Typically, dead-end, no outlet and private streets are not eligible for physical measures unless there is a major attractor on the street (e.g., church, school, etc.). The following additional criteria must also be met:
- 1. Minimum Vehicular Volumes: Eligible streets should have one or both of the following:
 - a) Daily Traffic Volume greater than 500 vehicles, or
 - b) Peak Hour Volume greater than 100 (any one hour during the day) and
- 2. A Documented Speed Problem the average speed is greater than 5 mph over the speed limit based on documented speed studies (greater than 30 mph).
- B. Certain residential collector streets, although classified as collector roads, may have characteristics of a local residential street. (For purposes of this document, a collector street is defined as a roadway that can have lower speeds and volumes and usually connect major arterials with local streets.) Typically, dead-end, no outlet and private streets are not eligible for physical measures. These streets may be considered for traffic management techniques if they meet all the following conditions:
 - 1. Posted speed of 25 mph
 - 2. Two-lane roadway
 - 3. Does not serve as the primary access to commercial, educational, or industrial sites.
 - 4. Minimum of 12 dwelling units fronting the street per 1,000 feet of roadway, including both sides.
 - 5. The volume of traffic is greater than 1,000 vehicles per day.
 - 6. Documented Speed Problem the average speed is greater than 5 mph over the speed limit based on documented speed studies (greater than 30 mph).

Due to the large number of requests that may be received each year, Traffic Engineering may perform a qualitative assessment in lieu of a more detailed quantitative assessment.

3.3. Step 2b – Calculate Priority (City Responsibility)

Once all the data outlined above has been collected and analyzed, the request will be prioritized. Requests scoring less than 40 points on the first chart below will automatically be considered low priority and not considered for physical measures (this threshold should be adjusted annually as more data becomes available). If a request is determined to be a low priority, consideration should still be given to addressing the issue through simple, alternative traffic management measures that can be implemented with City forces using available operating funds. These measures are typically low cost yet provide some support to the neighborhood to lessen the apparent problem.

Some alternative measures that may be considered include:

- Increased police enforcement and/or speed displays
- Education
- On-street parking
- Signing improvements
- Improvements or revisions to pavement markings, such as crosswalks or edgelines
- Changes to traffic regulations such as speed limits, or turn prohibitions

It is important that implementation of these alternative measures does not adversely impact adjacent streets or neighborhoods. If the anticipated impacts of a proposed measure cannot be easily identified or if the impacts are expected to extend beyond the study location, then the measure should not be considered except in conjunction with a full traffic management plan. For those neighborhoods not automatically categorized as low-priority, consideration must still be given to using simple, alternative traffic management measures before advancing to Step 3. If the issues cannot reasonably be addressed through any of the alternative measures identified above or if alternative methods have already been tried unsuccessfully, then the neighborhood will be considered for a more extensive traffic management project. All of the traffic management projects being considered will be prioritized based on their point totals according to the second chart below, available funding, and Council approval.

All streets must meet the requirements outlined under Step 2a above, and meet the following scoring requirements to move forward:

Criteria	Points	Basis for Point Assignment
Speed	0 to 50	85 th percentile traffic speeds more than 5 mph
		above the posted speed (5 points assigned for
		every mph over)
Volume	0 to 50	Average daily traffic volumes (2 points assigned
		for every 100 vehicles per day)
Total Points	Varies	Must have at least 40 points to move on to the
Possible		table below

Streets with a score of 40 or greater will advance to the detailed scoring process (see table below). Streets that score below 40 points will need to wait a minimum of three (3) years before starting the process over again. This timeframe can be adjusted if traffic patterns in the area change significantly before the three (3) year timeframe is over. These roadways are still eligible for education, enforcement, and possibly other low cost measures.

Criteria	Points	Basis for Point Assignment	
Speed	0 to 50 max		
		speed (1 point assigned for every 1 percentage point)	
Volume 0 to 5 max		Average daily traffic volumes (1 point assigned for every	
		100 cars over 500 vehicles per day)	
Elementary Schools	0 to 10 max	5 points assigned for each school zone in study area	
Pedestrian Generators 0 or 5		5 points assigned for public facilities (such as parks,	
		community centers, and high schools) that generate a	
		significant number of pedestrians on the street	
Bicycle Route	0 or 10	10 points assigned if any part of the street is a	
		designated bicycle route	
Transit Streets	0 or 10	10 points assigned if any part of the street is a	
		designated transit route	
Pedestrian Facility	0 or 10	10 points assigned if there is no continuous sidewalk on	
		at least one side of the street	
Crash Frequency	0 to 5 max	5 points for injury accidents, 1 point for property damage	
		(last 3 years)	
Total Possible Points	Varies		

The qualifications and selection scores for each street segment are added together. All street segments are then compared with each other. Those with the most total points are ranked the highest. City Council must approve physical measures and may change priorities due to available funding. The priority of a project may be accelerated if it is compatible with an existing or scheduled overlay or other repair in the area.

3.4. Step 3 – Initiate and Hold Public Meeting (City and Residents Responsibility)

Based on the results of Step 2, City staff will hold a neighborhood design charrette to begin the development of the project. A charrette is a highly interactive public meeting in which facilitators educate participants and encourage their interaction through a variety of activities designed to allow the participants to express their opinion and to understand the opinions of others. The purpose of the charrette is to:

- Educate the residents about traffic management, available traffic management measures, and the process;
- Review the traffic data gathered about the project and restate the issues to be addressed;
- Brainstorm traffic management techniques that could be utilized for the project;

 Develop a rough draft traffic management plan that addresses the issues and is supported by the neighborhood and is economically feasible.

The group of local representatives from the petition area or the homeowners association will be responsible for scheduling and facilitating the meeting. City staff will provide technical support and advise the community of the potential advantages and disadvantages of traffic management techniques. Educating participants about neighborhood traffic management is important to a successful program.

All residents in the defined study area will be invited to participate in the charette. The outcome of the meeting will give City staff a direction for the development of a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan for the neighborhood. A plan may include enforcement and education only but also could include physical measures.

3.5. Step 4 – Develop Preferred Traffic Management Plan (City Responsibility)

After the neighborhood design charrette, City staff will take all of the information that has been gathered and develop a conceptual plan for the implementation of traffic management techniques in the neighborhood. It is critical that appropriate City departments are included in this process, especially emergency services. The plan will include sketches, as appropriate, depicting the proposed installation sites of the preferred management measures and a plan to evaluate the effects on the neighborhood one year from the time of implementation. City staff will circulate the conceptual plan for review and comment to the various City departments through the Technical Review Committee (TRC). The City departments that will need to review the final plan prior to implementation may include:

- Risk Management
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Buildings and Grounds (if landscaping is anticipated)
- Waste Management Division
- Streets and Engineering Divisions
- Planning Department
- GLTC (if bus routes are in study area)
- Public School Transportation Department
- Historic District Review Boards (if applicable)

City staff will consider the various comments received from other City Departments and revise the conceptual plan accordingly. A preliminary cost estimate will be prepared for the final concept plan.

3.6. Step 5 – Survey Residents for Preferred Traffic Management Plan (City and Resident Responsibility)

The residents of the neighborhood will be given a copy of the preferred Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan and surveyed to determine what percentage agrees with the Plan. City staff will mail the survey out to all residents in the study area by mailing address. Each address in the study area will receive one survey. At this stage, there must be at least a 66% approval rating (a "yes" vote) of all potential/eligible properties for the preferred Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan to move forward. This percentage must be obtained regardless of the respondent rate. This survey requirement only applies to physical remedies within the road. There is no need to complete a survey prior to utilizing the approaches of enforcement and education.

Only one vote per address is allowed. If a property is an apartment complex with five or more units, only the property owner or management company may complete the survey. If an apartment has less than five units, it will be treated as individual properties. Respondents will have two (2) weeks to mail the survey back to the City.

3.7. Step 6 - Implement Project Based on Priority, Funding and Council Approval

The Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan will be implemented based on its priority score and available funding. If a project is very costly, it is conceivable that it may have to be carried over two (2) or more fiscal years to encumber enough funds to construct it. If a project can not completed over a course of five (5) years due to funding constraints, it can be reconsidered again for traffic management techniques of lesser cost. If the NTMP's funding is placed on hold by City Council, all traffic management projects that required funding will also be put on hold until such time as Council funds projects again. City Council has the authority to establish and/or change the priority of requested projects.

City staff will work with neighborhoods and interested parties to identify funding sources and to provide advice on obtaining project funds. Funding participation by neighborhoods or interested parties is welcomed and will be considered in prioritizing approved projects. A project that is fully funded could take up to 12 months to construct depending on the time of year and the complexity of the project.

After construction, a follow-up evaluation will be performed to ensure that the physical measures are effective. The City will determine the method to disseminate the findings and recommendations to those involved in the plan development, and obtain feedback as appropriate. If an unforeseen problem develops, the City may determine it appropriate to remove any installed physical devices. In this case, any private funding will not be refunded.

Appendix A COMMUNITY AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

COMMUNITY AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Community Awareness and Education

Many neighborhood traffic management programs include a community awareness and education component. This component is performed alone, as a first step before deciding to consider other actions, or in combination with other actions. A brochure has been developed for the City of Lynchburg which is presented on the following pages.

Enforcement

In addition to the traditional role of enforcing speed limits through issuing tickets, the police may also increase the community's awareness of speeding problems. An example is announcing locations for speed monitoring by radar through public service announcements (PSAs).

Increase Speeding Fine

The Virginia State Code authorizes increased penalties for speeding in residential neighborhoods. A community's voluntary acceptance of increasing the maximum penalty for exceeding the speed limit to \$200 will emphasize their commitment to addressing the problem. The primary focus of this program is to resolve the problems at the source, the violators. This will require a program to be implemented by City staff and approved by City Council.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS SAFER?

Studies have shown that motorists drive over 25 mph on residential streets. These studies also show that those who exceed the speed limit come from all age groups, not just teenagers or commuters, but everyone alike. What does this mean? The average motorist in Lynchburg drives faster than they should on residential streets. This usually occurs for two reasons:

- Local residents drive faster on their local streets because they feel familiar and comfortable.
- Outsiders use local streets as short cuts to busy arterial roads.

AS A DRIVER

SPEED

SLOW DOWN

The maximum legal speed limit on residential streets is 25 mph (unless otherwise posted). Drive 25 mph or less to give yourself more time to react to the unexpected, such as a child darting out from behind a parked car. Unless you make a conscious effort, you may drive faster than you should on residential streets. Remind neighbors to drive 25 mph. Make sure that others who use your vehicles drive 25 mph. Do not speed on major streets either, and avoid bad driving habits. Studies show that driving at a lower and more responsible speed on residential streets has very little effect on the time it takes to complete your journeys. Besides, IT IS THE LAW.

AVOID USING NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS AS SHORT CUTS



The more we use residential streets as short cuts, the more we disrupt the quality of life in neighborhoods. Neighborhood cut-through traffic increases noise and pollution in residential areas and results in a greater threat to the safety of children.

OBSERVE ALL THE RULES OF THE ROAD

Don't take chances, even on short trips. As statistics show, most accidents occur close to home. In particular, make sure you and all your passengers buckle up.

CHANGE YOUR DRIVING PATTERN ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

Learn to adopt a different attitude! You should expect the unexpected on residential streets. It may not be your fault if you have an accident, but imagine the pain you would live with if you hit a child or elderly pedestrian. Yield to pedestrians. Pedestrians have the right-of-way at intersections whether crosswalks are painted on the street or not.

AS A PARENT

Ensure that your children know and understand the rules of the road. Our children are the primary pedestrians on residential streets and are the most likely victims of careless drivers.



Studies have shown that smaller children have difficulty in making safe judgments about traffic dangers. Do not let your children play in the street. Warn them against darting into the road after pets or toys. Teach your children to stop, look both ways, and listen before crossing streets. Make sure your children know that even though cars are supposed to stop, they may not.

SUPERVISE YOUR CHILDREN'S TRIPS TO AND FROM SCHOOL

- Plan a safe walking route to school. Walk it with your child and point out areas where they should be especially careful.
- Take or arrange for transport of smaller children to and from school.
- Set a good example, drive the speed limit and drive with courtesy. Let children
 off on the correct side of the road when delivering or picking them up from
 school.
- Ensure that your children are properly equipped to ride bicycles on city streets.
- You need to equip them with two things:
 - 1. Bright clothing and a safety helmet
 - 2. A sound understanding of the Rules of the Road



DON'T RUSH!

Do not rush while driving. Be organized and leave a little earlier. In particular, do not rush getting children to and from school. Our urgency may cause them to disregard traffic safety and run headlong across the street.



AS A RESIDENT

TAKE THE INITATIVE

If there are potential problem areas along your street let your Public Works Department staff know (by calling Citizen's First), such as:

- Damaged or missing signs
- Pot-holes
- Landscaping that obscures a driver's vision of signs or intersections.



TALK WITH THE LYNCHBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

Speeding should be reported to your local police department. Let them know when the problem is more prevalent so they can conduct more effective enforcement. Ask for an occasional traffic patrol to deter speeders.

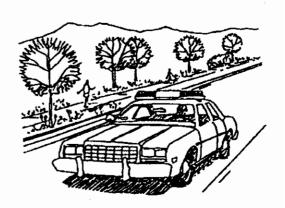
GET INVOLVED AND DO YOUR PART TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY



856-CITY (856-2489)

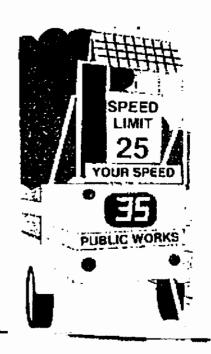
ENFORCEMENT (Visible and Active Police Presence)

Enforcement is the periodic monitoring of speeding and other violations by police. Police officers can come out to a neighborhood for short periods of time to issue tickets. Additionally, police officers can "take a neighborhood under their wing," and monitor traffic on a regular basis.



POLICE SPEED WATCH (Speed Wagon/Trailer)

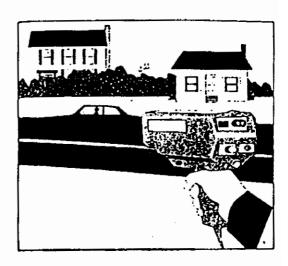
Police speed watches are the use of a portable radar speed meter capable of measuring vehicle speed graphically and then displaying the speed to passing drivers.



SPEED ALERT WITH WARNING (Neighborhood Traffic/Speed Watch) A Stage 1 Tool

A speed watch program is a neighborhood education process in which neighbors become more aware of the specifics of their speeding problems.

Neighborhood representatives are loaned radar guns by the City to monitor speed and identify chronic speeders. The Police or the City will then send letters to offending drivers calling attention to their behavior and requesting them to change it.



POTENTIAL SPEED WATCH PROGRAM

Instructions:

- 1. Complete names, addresses, and phone numbers of all participating residents (pg. 1).
- 2. Complete location, day, date, and times of radar surveillance (pg. 2). For locations, be as specific as possible using hour numbers and nearest intersecting streets (ex. Park Ave., #2501 #2599 between Maple and Oak).
- 3. Count *all* vehicles clocked by radar (pg. 2).
- 4. For those vehicles exceeding the speed limit by *more than* 10 mph, record the complete license plate number, speed, and time (pg. 2). Use additional sheets for each different location and/or day.
- 5. When finished, return the radar unit and the Speed Watch Program sheets as soon as possible to the Public Works Traffic Engineering Section. There is a maximum of three- (3) consecutive day usage of the radar unit.

Participants:

Name	Address	Phone No.
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1		

RADAR SURVEILLANCE

Location:

Day	Date	Times (To - From)	Total Vehicles

Speed	Date & Time
	Speed